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THE COLONIES AND IMPERIAL UNITY

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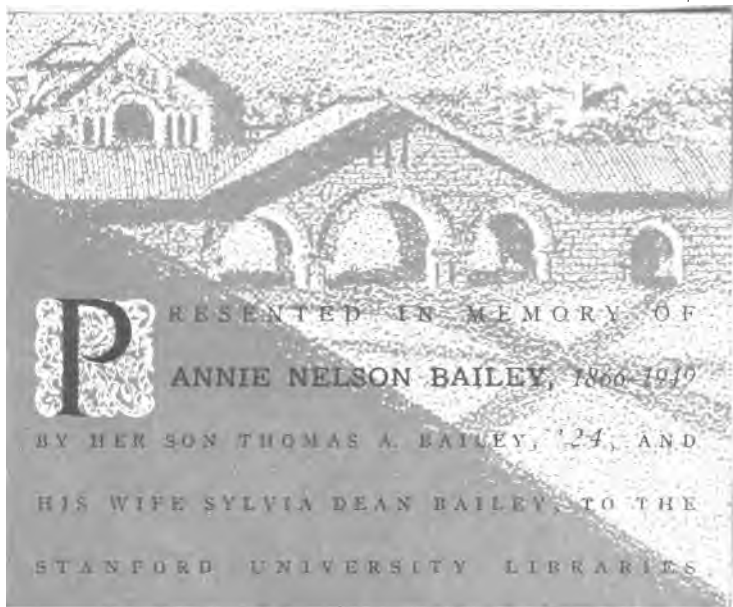
1871



BY
EDWARD JENKINS
AUTHOR OF "GINX'S BABY,"
"THE COOLIE," "STATE EMIGRATION," &c.

STRAHAN & CO. PUBLISHERS LUDGATE HILL.

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THE COLONIES AND IMPERIAL UNITY

OR

THE "BARREL WITHOUT THE HOOPS"

Inaugural Address

DELIVERED AT THE CONFERENCE ON COLONIAL QUESTIONS, HELD AT
WESTMINSTER PALACE HOTEL, IN LONDON,
JULY 19, 20, AND 21, 1871

By EDWARD JENKINS

AUTHOR OF "GINX'S BABY," "THE COOLIE," "STATE EMIGRATION," ETC., ETC.



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56 LUDGATE HILL, LONDON

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PREFACE.

THE following was delivered as the Inaugural Address of a "Conference on Colonial Questions," held at the Westminster Palace Hotel, on July 19th, 20th, and 21st. The tone and spirit of the criticism offered upon the proceedings in certain quarters is at once so unfair and infatuated, that I am induced, before the larger and complete Report of the Transactions, which is in course of preparation for the press, is issued, to send forth this Address in a shape that will enable almost every Englishman, at Home or in the Colonies, to form a judgment between the promoters of the Conference and its cynical detractors. It is printed as it was read with a few verbal alterations.

It would seem as though the time were fast coming when it will be a crime to be a reformer; when once more inconvenient propagators of new doctrines may be hanged or pilloried for being in advance of their age—for startling a selfish, self-satisfied, self-satiating community with troublesome warnings of its follies or its perils. British policy is now at the mercy—do I say at the mercy?—is now *tyrannised over* by a limited but powerful class. They are driving us to the devil with a smoothness, precision, and certainty that must be as grateful to him as it seems satisfactory to them. They resent the outcry of some such protesting passengers as we, and certain "guards" of the Press, I am sorry to say, assist in repressing it with singular intolerance.

In the following Address will be found explicitly set forth the objects of those who promoted the Conference. It was essentially what its name imported—a *Conference on Colonial Questions*. As illustrative of the general honesty and accuracy of our critics, I may mention that an article upon it in so careful a paper as the

Pall Mall Gazette was headed: The "Colonial Conference"—with the inverted commas as they are printed—a name not only entirely incorrect, but conveying a meaning very different from the term adopted by the committee. With equal accuracy the Conference has been criticised as if it had been the factious effort of a clique of returned colonists to create a mutiny when the sea was calm and the ship of Empire fairly bound. I would it were so—I would we were all as addled as they profess to think us! As a fact very few colonists were connected with the initiation of these meetings; the aim of them was far less ambitious than has been represented; they were projected not for agitation but for discussion—not to promote specific schemes but to give or gather information.*

Is it really necessary that I should meet the reflections made upon the programme of the Conference by friends or foes? No meetings on such questions so comprehensive in their range had before been projected, none certainly ever held. None so calculated to disarm the sort of objection urged against it could have been conceived. Yet such high-class journals as the *Daily News* and *Pall Mall Gazette* challenge us for worrying the public with needless outcries, while the *Standard* condemns us for not uttering sounds sufficiently defined and resolute. It may freely be admitted that as yet we are not in a position to organise a party to promote any specific scheme either of federalism or emigration. But is that a reason for silence? Again, exception has been taken to the variety of topics in the programme—to their relevancy, to their practical utility. It may be that in a tentative effort like this some errors were committed; but on the whole we may confidently leave this point to the opinion of the public, when the ensuing Address and the whole of the transactions are placed before it.

I should think that rarely was any honest effort, owned by its critics to be a somewhat enlightened one, so ignobly and viciously libelled as this. Of sneers we have had good store; of countervailing arguments but few. Feeble commonplaces, of the *laissez-faire* stamp, have been opposed to irrefutable facts; an alarm, too justly based and too strictly made good by proof, has been contemptuously ridiculed; the very breadth and elevation of our views is suggested as an evidence of the unpractical nature of our

* The twenty guarantors of the expenses of the Conference included Peers, sons of Peers, Members of Parliament, and English merchants.

propositions ; we are informed that principles and plans as yet never fairly discussed, though elsewhere become practical and visible realities, are the dreams of a speculative and theoretical philosophy. Such arguments as these may well be despised by reformers inspired with a great idea. Such arguments would have strangled the infant agitations by which the liberties and prosperity of England have been placed upon their glorious footing. There was no more conspicuous illusion to the stupid dogmatism of the past than the doctrine of Free Trade ; or, to go further back, than the creation of the most powerful republic the world has ever seen from the fortuitous league of some rebellious colonies.

It is possible that we may turn out to be to this age but unpractical speculators. *Laissez-faire* may win the day, as it has so often done before ! But with what consequences of blood, of tears, of agonies social and political, of morbid outbreaks and remorseful retrospects !

As an example of the manner in which the Colonial question is discussed, I may refer not unkindly to the *Pall Mall Gazette*. A bold and brave journal, not given to hysterical favouritism, it wins our admiration and must always challenge our respectful attention. This paper is one of few in the English press. It is not sold unconditionally to any man or devil, though it is not seldom very bigotedly tenacious of certain of its views. Yet in reviewing this Conference it falls into the style of tinkling, sprinkling, briskness that denotes shallow water—absolutely forgets itself—even ignores opinions seemingly not long since entertained. To its clear and infallible gaze, the members of the Conference were a company “sitting to afford an opportunity of ventilating all the crotchets which are formed in busy but unpractical minds, concerning one at least of the greatest problems of the day.” Let us “at least” be thankful for the admission—*there is a problem !* The writer of this article on the face of it shows that he never honestly attempted to ascertain what the busy and unpractical minds had said about it. This may pass. So may the other assertion that “the subjects touched on in this Conference appear to be so very miscellaneous, and some of them *so slightly connected with what is possible in politics*” (a phrase of remarkable sound, but extreme shadowiness of meaning) “that very slight notice of them may suffice.” In fact, we are forced to be content with no further notice of them. It would seem that the critic, when he came to look at the subjects, found that such notice would spoil his

paragraph, and wisely eschewed it. Is the application of coloured labour in British colonies—a subject rather prominently connected with the actual in administration, if not with the “possible in politics”—an idle topic of discussion?

Yet more amusing is the lofty air with which the writer, speaking of men to whom the whole history of the subject is certainly as familiar as it is to himself, bids us remember “that all this ground was gone over by intellects at least as acute as ours a hundred years ago!” and that Burke—who, it must be conceded, stands at a disadvantage as an authority under present circumstances, in the very fact that he lived “a hundred years ago,” and happens not to be living now—“was convinced of the hopelessness of absolute attainment of principles respecting it.” Franklin, if I remember rightly, was equally convinced the other way, and in some important matters his opinion was shrewder than Burke’s. But this ground was *not* gone over a hundred years ago. The discussions referred to took place when the conditions were entirely different. The circumstances did not exist and could not be foreseen. It is idle to trouble oneself with confuting such an argument, wonderful only because it appears in columns as a rule so carefully weeded of nonsense. When Free Trade was a theory—and steam and telegraph were scarcely ideas—and American Federalism was generating in the womb of politics—and English enterprise had not created new English communities all round the world—and Britain was hardly yet too full for her sons—and Toryism was a reality and not a spell—was it possible to argue conclusively for the time when a magical transformation of all these conditions has taken place? Alas! the ground gone over a hundred years ago broke off with disastrous precipitancy, carrying away with it half the strength and glory of our Empire! Is this the precedent to be stickled for?

Both the *Pall Mall Gazette* and *The Daily News* deny that the necessity exists for considering the question of confirming the bonds of empire. Just now they seem disposed to praise the flexibility, the simplicity, the harmony of our relations to the colonies. Yet I cannot forget that in the one originally appeared, and have been pretty persistently dry-nursed ever since, those letters of Professor Goldwin Smith, which have helped to open our eyes to the unsatisfactory and absurd condition of these relations; while within a few months some clever reflections upon them may be found in the comments of the other journal on the vexatious exercise of the veto in the case of an Australian Bill. We

have one advantage over our critics—we are at least consistent. Not very long since it was the fashion of anti-Colonial theorists to exaggerate the monstrosity of our Colonial arrangements; it is now their policy to reduce it to *nil*. They see plainly enough, as all men may see who will think as they look, that this is the surest way to disintegration. *Laissez-faire* is a notable solvent.

From another direction we are attacked for presumption. It is falsely declared that we are assuming to represent the colonies, who, we are informed, only desire “to be let alone.” We assume to represent nothing but the truth, as we see it. As to this desire, we may first reply that they take a singular manner of showing it; secondly, it is conceivably inexpedient to let them alone. It would not be difficult to publish a volume of protests, outcries, and remonstrances from the Colonial press on the various incidents of our Colonial administration. But when we come to examine those who use this “let-alone” phrase, we discover that their meaning is far more comprehensive than the words. I take the Hon. Mr. Strangways, who made a speech at the Conference, which any colonist present must have considered an ill reflection of Colonial manners, whatever he may have thought of the opinions; and a Mr. S. Sedgwick Cowper, a gentleman who writes to the *Times* from the Exhibition, on the basis of his birth and breeding in a colony. It is plain that to these gentlemen “left alone” means unconditional permission to be taken care of and defended at the expense of these islands, coupled with a perfect freedom to do or say anything they please, without regard to their Imperial connection, their Imperial duties, and, if possible, with special exemption from Imperial dangers. Such was the brazen proposal made by Australian politicians for the formation of a Pacific Zollverein, which should be invested with the right to declare itself free of the Empire in the event of a war which was dangerous or distasteful to it.*

* Against this, at the time of the proposal, the *Montreal Gazette* protested in these manly and patriotic words:—

“The Commissioners recommend their governments to make application to the European powers to declare the colonies neutral in the event of England’s becoming belligerent. This is puerility. Colonies have always been considered fair spoils of war, nor is there any reason why their accepted *status* should be changed. The Australian colonies are especially weak from their great distance from the protecting power, and especially tempting from their great wealth, and there is no shadow of reason to urge why all possible enemies of Great Britain should be called upon to renounce in advance any advantage derivable from the opportunity of swooping upon their golden shores. This is not the principle upon which to build up a hardy self-asser-

Such colonists as these—and I am happy to know they are few in number—forget that there are two parties concerned in this matter, and we may fairly remind them that this is not only a “Colonial question.” It is a matter of moment to every English taxpayer—to every English father of a family looking out for the happiness and prosperity of his children and his children’s children. In whatever agitation I have assisted, the main ends kept in view have been as much the interests of these realms as the advantage of the colonies. And the spirit in which to receive our propositions, right or wrong, is not that exhibited by such quasi-representatives as these gentlemen, who in my view too clearly show their hand and declare their aims. We have not yet quite reached the point at which politic pressure cannot be put on English colonies by a Colonial Minister, and when agitation in England for certain objects of Colonial reform is not both pertinent and practical. With a clique protesting that a Colonial Empire is a blunder, and a vast number of persons who live and move and have their being in the principle of *laissez-faire*, and, I fear, parties in some of the colonies whose policy is dictated by personal ambitions of jobbery and corruption, surely if any colonist is honestly anxious for the permanence of empire, he cannot wantonly express his astonishment or resentment that a party should be formed to counteract these tendencies. Nor as a fact is any such colonist entitled for a moment to the authority of a representative—for the recent history of opinion in most of the colonies is against him. I know something of the process of feeling on this subject in both

tive dominion anywhere, nor is it logical to claim all the peaceful advantages of English connection together with immunity from its warlike responsibilities. The empire must not be thus disintegrated.

“Duties and rights parallel to and complementing each other must have full play to weld in one symmetrical bond all the diverse communities which acknowledge the sovereignty of the motherland, nor must there be devised one sort of fealty for fair weather and another for foul. And we trust, too, that if unhappily the dear old country should become involved in serious European conflict, the colonial sentiment, capable of recommending a betrayal of the filial obligation to assist manfully therein, would make itself conspicuous only by its *absence*. It is not of such weak fibre that British colonists are made, and if their Australian representatives have seemed to confess an unworthy timidity we have still confidence that their own constituents will be proud to repudiate the imputation quite as promptly as would be say our own people of Canada, did their statesmen think fit to demand the full gift of imperial protection conjointly with the release from all share in Imperial anxiety.”

Canada and New Zealand; as to one, I would not a year since have insured its voluntary continuance in the Imperial combination at any premium, and the condition of the other at this moment ought to excite our gravest fears. With these facts staring us in face, we should be craven indeed if we permitted to pass unchallenged the false assertions of security so confidently made by the press. It is the old story of prophets crying, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace."*

* The *Montreal Gazette*, of July 25th, in a leader upon some essays by the author, says:—

"It certainly seems incongruous and absurd that during a recent parliamentary session more time should have been spent in discussing the question of a site for the new London Law Courts, than was employed in considering questions affecting the welfare of the great Indian Empire, or even of the colonies. The absurdity and weakness of this course are at length beginning to be seen and understood, and the session which is now drawing to a close in London has but strengthened the conviction that Imperial interests are often sacrificed in the British Parliament to interests which are local, and indeed, to some extent, petty; that, in a word, what we designate an *Imperial* Parliament is, after all, little more than a simple local Legislature. A German political writer lately, in discussing British questions, has seized upon and exposed this element of weakness in our Imperial system, pointing out the need of reconstructing British Imperial legislation, and arranging it on some such plan as the author of these essays has suggested. We observe, too, that other English writers, Froude among them, are investigating these grave subjects. We simply chronicle the facts. Yet we shrink not from giving expression to the opinion that these two questions are looming into importance—are becoming, in a word, the questions of the hour. The vital interests which they have for colonists cannot be overestimated."

* This is one of the leading journals of Canada, and scarcely bears out the view that colonists are indifferent to the question here discussed.

In the *Toronto Daily Telegraph*, referring to the same essays, occurs the following remarkable passage which I commend to the attention of the "Rest and be Thankful" party:—

"Every thinking man must admit that the time has almost arrived when English statesmen and Colonial statesmen must unite in dealing with the great question of the future of the Empire and the colonies. It cannot be denied that the interests of the colonies have not received that attention at the hands of the Imperial authorities that they are entitled to. Nor can it be denied that the action of certain parties in England has created dissatisfaction in the colonies, and forced upon the latter the belief that they are unwelcome and useless members of the Empire. We are certain that, as a rule, the colonists wish to maintain the connection; but it is a fact beyond dispute that there are many in every colony who feel that it is England's duty, in her own interests as well as in the interests of the entire Empire, to alter her colonial policy if she would perpetuate the connection. It will be well, therefore, for her statesmen to consider the scheme suggested in the

For myself I desire only that these questions should be fairly argued, and that the people generally of England and the colonies—and not a select party of doctrinaires—should have an opportunity of forming a fair judgment and pronouncing a distinct opinion upon them. This has never been tried. I believe the questions are too great and too grave to be burked even by a powerful press and a government with a majority. A suspicion that our Colonial affairs are not going on as smoothly as seems is rapidly spreading; and it is just possible the shrewd people of England may discover the blindness of their guides before they have quite led them into the ditch.

essays we have referred to. That scheme may not be the best, but the discussion of it may open the way to national consolidation, and bring into a permanent union all parts of the Empire."

REFORM CLUB, *August 7, 1871.*

THE COLONIES AND IMPERIAL UNITY:

Or the "Barrel without the Hoops.

AN ADDRESS.

NOT the least notable of the many currents of present-day opinion, is the movement of the public mind in Great Britain and the colonies on what are called "Colonial Questions." These uneasy fugitives flutter about the Imperial world, vainly seeking a foothold—*questions* because they are ever in quest of an answer. Yet are these subjects weighty in their importance: they involve matters economical, political, international, social, commercial—such as no nation, and this nation least of all, could afford for any length of time to leave unsettled. It is in view of the gravity of this series of questions, and on the ground that every Briton or colonist is one way or another interested in their solution, that the promoters of this Conference have called together prominent representatives of every interest, class, and phase of opinion to contribute information or thought upon them.

Before I proceed to a review of the various subjects to be submitted to your judgment, a word should be said about the attitude of those who in England have engaged in the Colonial question with so much energy and zeal. It is worth notice that the party they have formed includes elements of singular diversity. Every class, every shade of political opinion, every distinction of birth-place and interest, have fraternised in the great object of maintaining the integrity of the Empire. We need not inquire too curiously into their motives: whether they are colonists who foresee for their respective communities innumerable perils and disasters in separation; or Britons, who regard with shame and disquiet the prospect of Imperial dissolution; or economists, who see great national resources endangered, and the openings half closed to an expanding population; or philanthropists, assured that the restric-

tion of British dominion is the restriction of wise and just and holy influences over a vast portion of the globe: the honest end of all their labours is to promote happy and enduring peace, inde-feasible unity, and the prosperity of every part of the Empire. It seems to me—even setting aside the practical incentives—that men propounding ideas so grand, so unselfish, so full of breadth, nobility, and hope, whatever may be thought of their proposals, deserve at least a generous hearing from their Imperial audience—win the right to be received with patience, and to be criticised without acrimony or scorn. I am sure that I do not assume too much when I say for all those who, in their various and sometimes apparently antagonistic ways, devote themselves to this cause, that theirs is not the attitude of persons desiring to force unnatural or repulsive benefits on any portion of Her Majesty's dominions, but to set forth in a fair light, for examination by them all, the difficulties, or disabilities, or perils of the present, the most desirable conditions for the future, and the principles upon which we may proceed to labour in establishing those conditions. Thank God, though we may not agree about means, we cannot disagree about ends. In no division of the Empire at home or abroad, is there any considerable party that dares to uplift in bold terms the standard of Disruption. A few doctrinaires—some economical cuttle-fishes dissipating their inky arguments through the waves of public opinion—some statesmen timorous of defining their aims with candour, yet vaguely hinting at remote and awful contingencies—may have contrived to excite uneasy sensations; but, in my belief, from London to Montreal, thence to Wellington and Melbourne, thence to Calcutta and Bombay, thence to Capetown and thence to Honduras, over the magnificent range of these dominions, the heart of the British people is loyal to the conservation of the Empire—the Empire, not for one, but for us all.

I propose to devote the principal part of my address to this supreme question of Imperial unity. But around it circle questions which, compared with anything but it, are of eminent importance. The conditions of society in these islands may well set the observer aghast with apprehension. There seems to be no end to the prolific energy of our race. It is disastrously persistent in inconvenient propagation. Our population increases at the rate of two and a quarter millions in a decade. Our wealth increases with it, but unhappily without equally distributing its benefits among the people. Our pauperism maintains, if it does not

extend, its terrible standing. Nearly eight millions is annually cast with vain prodigality into this Curtian Gulf of misery. Its appetite is insatiable, its deep black horrors are enough to send a shudder through heaven. I for one am not of those who find in Emigration a panacea for the evils of our national condition ; but I do see in it, conducted on national and business principles, vast alleviatory powers ; I do contend that in it lie the seeds of richest blessing for our own people and the colonies ; I do assert that any act by which the free and facile outpouring of our population to provinces under British rule—and, as far as possible, amalgamated with British social, political, and commercial interests—is checked, will be not only a crime, but a blunder ; I do look upon it as one of the keys to problems which are alarming economists and prompting our workmen to the logic of the *Commune* ; and, lastly, I do propound it as the born right of every Englishman, and therefore of the suffering sons of toil, to have their attainment of the boon which the Colonial Empire offers them facilitated by every effort and sacrifice consistent with economy, justice, and humanity. This question concerns not only ourselves, but the distant provinces to which labour carries-development and wealth. They surely are interested in securing that their relations to this country shall be so determined that their society, their lands, their trade shall be looked upon by crowding multitudes as correspondent with their own ; and on their part no sacrifice were too great, no pains ill-spent, to keep up the inflow and to secure the ties of so valuable a fellow-citizenship. It is not true that nationality has no influence on emigration. The arguments of Mr. Goldwin Smith and others drawn from the enormous emigration to the United States, are fallacious, for this reason—that a vast proportion of that exodus has been of Irish, and one of the strongest original influences to prompt it in that direction was political discontent. Comparatively with that, a small proportion of Englishmen emigrate to the United States—for them our own colonies are still their *other home* !

There is no need that I should discuss this question here, since I am happy to say so distinguished an advocate as my friend Mr. M'Cullagh Torrens, M.P., is to introduce it to-morrow evening to the Conference, supported by the able contributions of Mr. Clarke. But I cannot refrain from recalling to you that noble and never-to-be-forgotten passage in Mr. Carlyle's "Past and Present," in which he puts this and education side by side as two of the great policies of the future. We have obtained the one, it rests with us to work on untiringly for the other :—

"An effective 'teaching service' I do consider that there must be, some Education-Secretary, Captain-General of Teachers, who will actually contrive to get us taught. Then, again, why should there not be an 'emigration service,' and secretary, with adjuncts, with funds, forces, idle navyships, and ever-increasing apparatus—in fine, an effective system of emigration—so that, at length, before our twenty years of respite ended, every honest, willing workman, who found England too strait, and the 'organisation of labour' not yet sufficiently advanced, might find likewise a bridge built to carry him into new Western lands, there to 'organise' with more elbow room some labour for himself? there to be a real blessing, raising new corn for us, purchasing new webs and hatchets from us; leaving us at least in peace, instead of staying here to be a physical-force Chartist, unblessed and no blessing! Is it not scandalous to consider that a Prime Minister could raise within the year, as I have seen it done, a hundred and twenty millions sterling to shoot the French; and we are stopped short for want of the hundredth part of that to keep the English living? The bodies of the English living, and the souls of the English living—these two 'services,' an education service and an emigration service, these, with others, will actually have to be organised!

"A free bridge for emigrants; why, we should then be on a par with America itself, the most favoured of all lands that have no Government; and we should have, besides, so many traditions and mementoes of priceless things which America has cast away. We could proceed deliberately to 'organise labour,' not doomed to perish unless we effected it within year and day—every willing worker who proved superfluous, finding a bridge ready for him. This verily will have to be done; the time is big with this. Our little isle is grown too narrow for us; but the world is wide enough yet for another six thousand years. England's sure markets will be among new colonies of Englishmen in all quarters of the globe. All men trade with all men, when mutually convenient, and are even bound to do it by the Maker of men. Our friends of China, who guiltily refused to trade, in these circumstances had we not to argue with them in cannon-shot at last, and convince them that they ought to trade? 'Hostile tariffs' will arise, to shut us out; and then again will fall, to let us in; but the sons of England, speakers of the English language, were it nothing more, will in all times have the ineradicable predisposition to trade with England. Mycale was the Pan-Ionian rendezvous of all the tribes of Ion, for old Greece: why should not London long continue the all-Saxon home-rendezvous of all the 'children of the Harz-Rock,' arriving, in select samples, from the Antipodes and elsewhere, by steam and otherwise, to the 'season' here? What a future, wide as the world, if we have the heart and heroism for it, which, by Heaven's blessing, we shall,—

'Keep not standing fixed and rooted,
Briskly venture, briskly roam;
Head and hand, where'er thou foot it,
And stout heart are still at home.
In what land the sun does visit,
Brisk are we, whate'er betide:
To give space for wandering is it
That the world was made so wide.'"

Again, one of the most desirable economic movements that could be furthered by our effort, would be to cheapen and increase the supply of food for the working classes of Great Britain. Those who are conversant with the colonies know that they produce in profusion various kinds of substantial food and condiments, which, could our working-classes be induced to adopt them, would enlarge and vary as well as enhance the enjoyment of their meals. Maize, rice, plantains, and cassava are staples of food to vast numbers of the human race, and, with a little enterprise, could be made as familiar at our tables as the potato. I am glad that so competent an authority as the editor of the *Knife and Fork*—a journal one can hardly read without endangering his content with the food of ordinary mortals—is to open a discussion on this important subject during the Conference.

Another question arises out of our Imperial greatness—I mean the question of coloured labour in our tropical possessions. It is a conceded proposition that the development of the illimitable resources of those parts of the Empire can only be accomplished with the aid of tropic-born labourers; and it will, I presume, be also admitted even by the warmest philanthropist, that practically this labour *can only be organised and applied under the direction of Europeans*. But the latter, in the pursuit of quick, large fortunes, have been found, like the whole class of employers throughout the world, apt to set the interest of their labourers at the standard, not of morality, or justice, or even humanity, but of their own profit. Hence we have had slavery, and the horrors of the middle passage, and the Coolie traffic; San Domingo and Jamaica insurrections; the child-apprenticeship of the Dutch Republics of South Africa; and, it is said, wrongs inflicted on unhappy Polynesians by Englishmen. We have wiped away from the shield of Britain the blood of the slave—it will ever be our duty to see that no similar blot shall ever befoul our escutcheon. At this moment vast bodies of Coolies are being transferred from the densely populated communities of India to the West Indies; and in Polynesia the people of Queensland are seeking for immigrants to assist in the hard labour of the cotton or sugar fields. Very strong feelings are enlisted on both sides of the questions arising out of these relations; and it appears to me that we have arrived at a time when it is important that the truth, on whichever side it lies, should be distinctly ascertained. Therefore I am glad that Mr. Chesson, whose connection with the Aborigines Protection Society is a guarantee that he has studied the question, is to open a discussion upon it—one to which

we hope to have the contributions of all who are interested on either side.

To a great race like ours, conspicuously at the head of free nations, yet always eager for improvement in every branch of our polity or economy, it cannot be unimportant that we should perpetually review our home institutions in the light of the newer developments of Colonial society or polity; nor can it be of little consequence to those new communities, having drawn the principles of many of their laws from the fountain-head of English jurisprudence, to resort to us for experience in the course of their political development. Indeed, one of the advantages of union between our provinces and ourselves is the reciprocal action between them and us of principles and experiments; and therefore I look forward to the examination of Colonies and Colonial Governments by so competent a hand as my friend Professor Amos as one of the most interesting and valuable contributions to the Conference. When I add that the topic of simplification of methods of land transfer—one likely to excite no small discussion ere long in England—will be treated of by the inventor of the cheap and simple system called the *Torrens system*, Mr. R. R. Torrens himself; that the deeply important question of the constitution and administration of the Colonial Office is to be handled by Sir Drummond Wolff; that Mr. Herring, whose noble labours have won so much of our sympathy and admiration, will relate to us some of the results of his work, which he was privileged to see with his own eyes in Canada; that Mr. Abraham, an Englishman and New Zealand landowner, will contribute a monograph on the terms on which the Imperial Government granted to the colonists the Imperial lands—I think it is unnecessary to say a word about the importance and the promise of these meetings. We shall welcome a free expression of opinion, within the necessary regulations, having no aim but the discovery of truth, and having faith that truth can never be injured by discussion. So much for the programme; let me now turn to my subject.

Sam Slick, in one of his happiest sallies, compared the British Empire to *a barrel without the hoops*. The more that simile is thought upon, by any who are conversant with the facts and principles of our Imperial Government, the more will it startle the thinker with its graphic truth and power. At this moment I know of no imperial tub that can match this wonderful organism. The barrel of Swiss confederation is bound round and round with

lithe and strengthful hooping: the vast tuns of American and German nationality have been riveted with bands of iron and steel; but this British imperial hogshead, with its mighty staves, bulging, canting, and sprawling over the wide world, alone possesses the form of bulkiness without the power thereof. It is an amazing and humiliating fact, that *there is no man living who can intelligibly define the British Imperial Constitution*. The footing on which several of the most important colonies stand in relation to Great Britain, is as indefinite and casual as the cohesion of a number of staves in the shape of a tub when the hoops are wanting. To this point I shall ask your attention at some length. On this point I believe the majority of those who have taken a part in calling this Conference together, desire that the thought, the experience, the wishes of men throughout the Empire should be consulted, at a time when calm and temperate discussion may help to define principles which might be stifled or cast aside in the passions of a political hurricane. For no one can doubt, if the situation is such as I have described it, that the questions involved are of the greatest moment, not alone to us and our children, but to the world and future generations. We, therefore, who see the possibilities that loom before the Empire, offer no excuse for endeavouring to draw from its peoples some expression of opinion—*first*, on the truth or untruth of the perils of the situation; *secondly*, on the nature of the measures to be taken for improvement or security.

We have not to go far to find evidences of a state of our relations closely bordering on the critical.

A great Imperial question is exciting our attention at this period of our national history—I mean the question of military organisation. Am I not bound, in all fairness to the colonies, to point out that this question has been discussed, and is being legislated upon, with a total disregard to the meaning of the term, "An Imperial Army," with a careful and seemingly deliberate reticence upon the subject of Imperial requirements, with a narrow, bigoted, and fatal restriction of the reforms to be initiated, to the indifferent area and the limited interests of these islands? Is it not idle to select and put forward at the Colonial Office estimable men, to propagate the assurance that statesmen are undyingly loyal to the Colonial connection, when in every department of Imperial organisation the colonies are ignored, their advice is unasked, their co-operation disdained, their concern in such matters hardly even discussed? The Dominion of Canada has enrolled a militia of 300,000 men; the

ballot may be put in force among a population to whom time and money are generally more valuable than to the people of England, among whom flourish ideas and institutions as free as our own. May we not learn something from this colony? Might we not with advantage embrace within a scheme of "Imperial" military organisation men of such mettle? May we not inhale from them some of that patriotic fire which our statesmen would fain have us believe is dying out in our midst? Ought we not to consult with a people so independent and so strong upon methods of utilising their material, and organising co-operative forces and reserves? It is said to be difficult or impossible to get the colonies to unite with us in a scheme of Imperial defence. Of course it is impossible upon the terms which appear to be the only ones that suggest themselves to the objectors. We ask what we term a *dependency* to create for itself an army—that is, an army of the dependency. What is the natural, perhaps the intended, conclusion? If they must maintain a separate, not Imperial, army, they may justly say, "Let us have the power and glory of a separate state. We certainly do not intend to maintain a provincial army, officered, manned, and equipped by ourselves, to be applicable to your quarrels, and in times of war subject to your disposition. You do not even offer to put our soldiery on a footing of Imperial troops."

But our rulers seem to have been afraid frankly to propose to our colonies to grant them a voice in questions of peace or war, in return for their assistance in organising a great Imperial army. The offer of Australian colonies to pay for British troops, proves that some of them, at least, are not unwilling to entertain any reasonable propositions; and, without doubt, the creation of one Imperial army, instead of these separate organisations, is the most obvious, most cheap, and politic way of establishing an Imperial military system.

On the other hand, the fact is that, professing to give the colonies independence, the attitude of our Government has been too much the attitude of a patron or a master—I won't say a petulant mamma. It has put forth no frank, well-considered effort to make them feel that we hold them to be an inalienable part of ourselves. Hence has arisen such a state of relations, that so able a man as Sir George Cornwall Lewis was driven to a paradox—discrediting the advantages of dependencies that were practically independent, and apparently unable to suggest any remedy for the resulting difficulties but the surgical one of amputation.

My drift will be understood by contrasting with our treatment of a colony the condition and relation to the United States of one the territories before it is received into the Union. Whatever measures the Washington Government may deem it necessary to take in the way of coercion or repression, whatever liberty of local government may be accorded, it is perfectly understood from first to last that the territory is *en pupillage* for state manhood, that the heavens would fall before the Federal Government would abandon its jurisdiction over it. Were New Zealand or Cuba to be annexed to the United States, the conduct of the Federal Government would be regulated by the same principles. The consequence of such a policy is to draw the bonds of union immovably tight, instead of slackening them to the peril of the connection.

It has been a favourite assertion of Mr. Goldwin Smith and his followers that Canada was the great cause of danger of a rupture with the United States, as we have been told to believe that London would be the chief object of German rapacity. Hence they draw the simple conclusion that the sooner we can slip the arm of our Canadian friends and pretend not to know them, the sooner shall we have reduced the chances of a quarrel with a powerful State. By all means then, people of England, erect London at once into a separate government and tell the Germans that we repudiate her! In recommending that transaction every one will remember how cool was the disregard of Canadian feeling and with how insulting an indifference to the privileges of a loyal people the doctrine was propounded. The absence of political morality involved in the proposition that what is inconvenient is to be abandoned, is, unhappily not unique in the argument of some schools of speculative politicians, and its development in other directions is to be viewed with dismay.

I know no humiliation for a people greater than the decadence of national sentiment; no danger to their permanence or greatness so imminent, as to see them bent, at all events, upon success before honour, on peace at the expense of conscience, on ease to avoid sacrifice. The ignoble fate which has befallen all such nations is to my mind one of the few gratifying compensations of history; one that satisfies with peculiar relish our human instinct of right. Believe me this sense of national honour is no intangible thing. It is that which prevents a people from sinking down to a community of tradesmen; which promotes some of the best and healthiest activities of its life. I remember an American epigram on Aaron Burr, that he was so mean a man that he had only just

enough soul to keep his body from corruption ; but such a people is even less living than that. No money incentives can move a nation to such self-strengthening acts as do the clear dictates of national conscience emphatically and boldly pursued. It were better that a nation should utterly perish in the agony of a noble purpose, than languish in a syncope of luxurious indifference to honour, to duty, and to glory.

So much for military organisation. Let us turn to our naval affairs. Still more do they need adjustment on some foundation of Imperial breadth and unity. The burden on our own people is immense. If the consequent expense is to be continuous, is it to be applicable to the defence of colonies which bear no share of it ? I need not say it is to the navy rather than the army that the colonies look with confidence in the period of an apprehended war. Yet neither are the colonies asked to contribute their quota to the maintenance and increase of that which is their best defence, nor is any attempt made to utilise, in the way of naval reserve or otherwise, some of the splendid human material available among them ; for instance, the fishermen of the Canadian fisheries. And why ? Because it is felt that with our present inane system of relations, *although they would be involved in our perils, they have no voice whatever in determining our conduct concerning them.*

As a specimen of the extraordinary vacillation in our policy, and the indefiniteness of our relations, I may cite the case of the *Cerberus*, a gunboat, of whose perilous and romantic voyage to Australia you have all heard. We have refused to maintain troops in Australia, yet we have sent out a vessel, built at great cost, four-fifths of which was borne by the Imperial Exchequer, and one-fifth by the colony. Granted the contribution is a proper one, where is the consistency of our rulers ? Why are troops withdrawn on the ground that the colonies ought to provide for their own defence if a short while after we pay a large sum for naval armament, and make a present of it to the colony ? So far as I can learn, no arrangement has been come to with the colony respecting the management of this vessel, whether she will or will not in case of war fall under the command of the British admiral on that station. Instead of fixing these things at the time of the gift, the Governments appear to have left them to the evolution of chances.

We thus see that to talk of an Imperial army and navy in existing conditions is to talk of that which does not, and is not intended to exist. There are no such things. There is a British

army, a British navy, a Canadian militia—and the ship *Cerberus*. Do not let me be supposed to fix the humiliation of this fact entirely upon our ruling statesmen: it is chiefly owing to the anomalous character of Colonial relations. There is, and can be, no idea of permanence or unity in a system by which whole nations of Englishmen are practically disavowed in the arrangements that concern the defence of their hearths and their freedom. There can be no satisfaction to ourselves in conditions under which the whole cost of defending thriving colonies is cast upon our shoulders, and they are not organised to co-operate with us for the common defence. But it seems very fatuous reasoning to contend that such discrepancies are proofs of incompatibility, when no effort has been made to remove them by mutual negotiation; when no statesman is bold enough even to offer to make the necessary inquiries! Is it not too true that the effect of modern politics has been more and more to change the House of Commons into an English vestry, and its leaders into parochial officers? We conduct the affairs of the vast proportion of our Empire on the principles of tradesmen elected to repair church pews and mend the chain or the handle of the parish pump. We continue to earn, with more honourable adherence to the character than ever before, the name of a “nation of shopkeepers.”

Turn to commercial relations; We hit upon yet more fatal anomalies. I can see some consistency from a purely Imperial point of view in the old system of monopoly by which Colonial trade was fettered; it was an assertion of the supremacy of Empire over local selfishness. In so far, perhaps, as that taught men to sacrifice something for the common good of a wide dominion it was a beneficent and specially ennobling thing. But we resorted to free-trade at the same time that we began—most properly let it be admitted—to recognise considerable independence in our colonies. There is, however, no sense of *Imperial proportion* in our arrangements. We have failed to insist with older colonies, or lay down the preliminary articles with new ones, that *free-trade was to be the principle of their financial legislation*. Hence our manufactures have been subjected to protective duties, and in the colonies capital that ought to have been devoted to agricultural expansion has, at immense hindrance to economic production, been devoted to the establishment of manufactures, the labour engaged in which was also diverted from the natural channels of Colonial development. The disastrous influence of this policy on some of the colonies it is impossible to estimate.

Trades' unions have conspired to keep up rates of wages where all labour should rather have confederated in the far more lucrative effort to increase production. Land, which capital and labour might have developed, has remained idle; trade has been cramped, and the chief benefit of a colony to a mother country—namely, the increased and cheapened supply of food and raw material—has been to a large extent neutralized. Nor has this been wholly unreciprocated on our part. The sugars and rums of British Guiana alone, it is said, in one year suffered from the hands of the Imperial Government an impost of over £2,200,000 sterling—or nearly one-thirtieth of the Imperial revenue. A singular comment on the outcry made by agitating financial reformers against the protective duties of our colonies on articles of home manufacture. The ancient saw about the condiments for two sexes of a silly bird is surely applicable to this argument. What is sauce for the British goose is sauce for the Colonial gander.

With all this our present policy is practically tending to force each of the colonies, at disproportionate expense, to organise for itself separate naval and military forces, the necessary revenue being attained by laying additional burdens on British productions. A Federal Imperial system would keep that expense at the minimum, and Imperial influence judiciously exercised assimilate the commercial policy of the provinces to that of Great Britain.

It is useless now to reflect upon the manner and terms of our grant to Canadian and Australian colonies of the independence they possess. That it was incautious is too little to say—it was idiotic. On some of the most important matters our Government appears to have proceeded on no settled principles, to have adhered to no conditions; the Colonial independence was gradually developed upon the old system of dependence; whatever theory of Crown supremacy or veto was retained ministers have reached the point at which they failed or feared to enforce it. The *Times** once admirably summed up the evils that have arisen from this *dilettante* policy:—

“When we give a colony responsible government, we constitute it for all purposes of internal legislation and administration—that is, for almost all purposes, foreign relations alone excepted—a separate and independent territory. We thus expose ourselves to many inconveniences. The internal legislation of the colony may involve principles hostile to Imperial interests; the colonies may impose protective or discriminating duties; they may get up a war of tariffs with each other, or *they may pass laws inconsistent with*

* October 21, 1861.

the treaty engagements of the Empire, or contrary to our notions of justice. For the conflict that arises in the case of improper legislation, a species of remedy is provided by the veto of the Crown; for conduct in the Colonial administration hostile to Imperial interests, there is no remedy whatever so long as it meets the approbation of the Colonial Parliament."

This description, colonists will know, is slightly exaggerated, but it is too correct. The terms of connection with the Imperial Government have not been defined with sufficient clearness; the subjects of Imperial and Colonial jurisdiction have not been carefully discriminated; the principles on which the veto has been exercised have been vague and fortuitous. For instance, the irrepressible deceased wife's sister, after winning the consent of an Australian Parliament to enlarge, in a world of five hundred millions of males, her sphere of possible depredation to the extent of one man more, was balked by the Secretary of State in England; while, on the other hand, a copyright Act of the Canadian Parliament, distinctly colliding with an Imperial Statute must have received the assent of the Privy Council. Lastly, the responsibility of an independent community united with another under one sovereignty, to share the burdens as well as to accept the benefits of the union, has never been affirmed. What is the use of speculating about Imperial integrity on such conditions as these? Why should we argue the inarguable? No nostrum can keep up a healthy circulation between members joined by gum and despatch paper, and not by living community of interest, responsibility, and duty. To have carelessly conceded to dependencies more than any of the free states of America reserved to itself—the right to impose tariffs on commutual trade, to dictate the terms of the immigration of their fellow-citizens or practically to forbid it, to enact laws inconsistent with Imperial interests—was an error as fatal, in my belief, to the permanent good of the colonies themselves, as it was a stupid and criminal renunciation of our own interests. And, truly, it is a wonder that bonds like these have so long endured the strain. It is significant and gladdening evidence of a unity of heart throughout the Empire which even such blundering malversation is unable to destroy.

The only remedy that was suggested for this state of things was precisely the remedy that was most dangerous, as well as the least likely to find any Government bold enough to adopt it.

"We are quite clear," said the *Times* in the article already quoted, "that it would be the duty of the Secretary for the Colonies to veto all laws imposing protective or discriminating duties, proscribing nations at peace

with us, like the Chinese, or in any other way infringing the great principles of Imperial policy. The whole subject must, before very long, force itself on the attention of Parliament, for the evils which we have pointed out are not of a stationary nature, but must go on in a progressive ratio, extending and increasing their baneful influence."

Ten years have passed. Protective duties have been imposed. Secretaries of State have not intervened. They have left the veto unused when they ought to have used it, and have sometimes intervened when they ought not to have done it. The subject cannot be said to have *forced itself* on the attention of Parliament. We have gone on in the usual British happy-go-lucky way. Discontent has increased. We have heard the whisper of independence across the seas. Immigration has actually been by some colonies discouraged, not in the interest of the immigrants, but of local trades-unions. The Imperial Parliament has become choked with legislative subjects ranging from the Confederation of the Canadian Empire, to the prescription, in legal language, of the size, shape, and colour of the penny bottles in which small apothecaries are to vend their drugs. Parliamentary respiration has ceased—utterance is stopped—even digestion is impeded—and political doctors are anxiously holding glasses and feathers to the nose for signs of life. All this while we, the people of the Empire, with all these momentous questions, have quietly drifted into seas the anchorage and fathomage whereof are not laid down in any authentic political chart. The captain meanwhile has resolved to take no bearings, and has thrown the compasses overboard.

"O Navis! referent in mare te novi
 Fluctus. O quid agis! fortiter occupa
 Portum. Nonne vides ut
 Nudum remigio latus
 Et malus celeri saucius Africo
 Antennæque gemant? *ac sine funibus*
Vix durare carinæ
Possint imperiosius
Æquor?

I see the terrible end of this drifting policy! One by one our colonies will drop away from us—drop away on conditions that may render confederation as hopeless as it now is with the United States, to any but sentimental dreamers. They may go before they are matured for independence, become the prey of internal disorders, and probably be attached, by choice or otherwise, to some people more wise and noble in their generation than we.

In fine, we are brought to this point. Our great colonies are now *dependencies* only in name—they are in reality independent attachments, the bonds of union being very indefinite and variable. Now the whole of the difficulties and evils on which I have animadverted arise out of a policy directed to the notion of *dependency*, when the reality of it is wanting. In fact, our Colonial Minister is asked to carry out simultaneously two antagonistic lines of action. You have a startling example of this in the case of the Washington Treaty, when the Home Ministry exercised on the one hand, the prerogative of the Crown, on the other, by express terms in an Imperial treaty, reserved to the Canadian *dependency* the right of repudiating some of its provisions—a position easy to criticise, which is manifestly before all the world a ridiculous one, but which, after the declarations and concessions of successive ministries of both parties, was evidently the only alternative to a rupture. This is the British Empire.* *Stat nominis umbra!* My definition of a clever man is, one who always has his eyes and nose and mouth and ears and hands and feet and brains about him; and a great State, to be a living State, as clearly needs the perpetual and sympathetic activity of all its functions. But what are we to say of a State whose extremities, instead of being coherent, vital members, cling to the trunk only by flaccid and rotting integuments?

But the point I am extremely anxious to make this evening is, that the whole of the arguments of anti-Colonial writers have been directed against *dependencies*. It was of the relation of dependencies that Adam Smith first protested the weakness; it was of *dependencies* that Sir George Cornwall Lewis summed up the disadvantages; and it was against the evils of *dependencies*—actual or theoretical—that Professor Goldwin Smith wielded a Quixotic pen; but against inceptive states, territories, or colonies united to us by ties such as are easily conceivable, such as we have examples of, on principles determined by wisdom and mutual interest, their arguments are inapplicable. No argument has hitherto been adduced to prove that any Colonial adjunct of the Empire, brought on equitable conditions to form a homogeneous part of it, will not add to its strength, prosperity, and glory, or will not, as a consequence, enhance its own prospects and position. The basis of such an arrangement must be laid in principles, some of which are unknown to our existing relations—

* This is the felicitous conjunction of which the *Daily News* and the *Pall Mall Gazette* so calmly assure us!

—common citizenship, common interest, common responsibility, common and united international action, common defence, and some community of government. The results of such a union would in the end be confirmed and enlarged trade, wider distribution of capital and labour through the Empire, removal of restrictions, and the enormous benefits of more extended fields for the energy and ambition of our citizens. If we should attain to this, we may thank Sir George Cornwall Lewis and his plagiarists that, by pointing out the anomalies in the relation of *dependencies*, they have induced us to revise the Imperial constitution, and to substitute for that term and those relations a name and bonds more just, more flexible, more strong and glorious, more beneficent and enduring.

I do not wish for a moment to be understood to acquiesce in the conclusions upon the policy of Imperial disintegration urged by Professor Goldwin Smith and others. It is the policy of a craven and degenerate people—the policy of mammon. They ask, What benefit do you derive from these expensive offshoots? and the reply being incapable of expression in money, they conclude that there is none. The unit of measurement of a nation's greatness is with them the pound sterling.

The respect of the American for the almighty dollar is proverbial. By that valuable standard he is able to express his estimate of everything, from a cool drink to the pleasures of Paradise. I once remember accompanying a Philadelphian over a small estate on which there grew, throwing its great branches over the gable of the house, a particularly fine fir-tree. He gazed awhile on its majestic proportions, and the felicity of its situation, and then in a rapture of admiration exclaimed: "That's a splendid tree. It's the ornament of the place. I wouldn't have that tree away from there for fifty dollars"—an accurately commercial estimate of the delight such an amenity was likely to afford. Is it to this standard that we are to bring our ancient Imperial glory, with its majestic and far-spreading branches? Are we to estimate nothing for the ennobling incentives for a whole population to enterprise, to commerce, to religious and philanthropic exertion, to practical and progressive statesmanship, to the highest arts of social life? That beating drum, marking all round the globe the passage of the sun and lines of Empire, which inspired the grand admiration of the American orator, awakens a sentiment far more worthy than that of pride in the breast of a Briton. It is the monitor of his world-wide responsibilities—the alarum of duty. It reminds him of

direct brotherhood of citizenship with a third of the human race. It gives breadth as well as animation to his political ideas and international action. Ill becomes it any man, however philosophic, to disdain this sentiment, for it is one of practical influence in a nation's life. It affects even the relations of trade, and the courses of commerce: it has to do with the range of civic ambition, the growth or permanence of Imperial power. In the great play of national life there are motives other than selfishness and avarice. The forces awakened and put forth by Imperial energies are regenerative and invigorating. I do not see how it is possible to overcome that serious argument from the history of Empires, so well propounded by Mr. Herman Merivale, "Never has there yet been an instance in which a colonising nation can be shown to have deteriorated in population or wealth by reason of her efforts in that direction, however lavish and long continued."

Both Sir George Cornwall Lewis and Professor Goldwin Smith assert their doubt that the relation of colony to parent country has any influence on the currents of trade. Indeed, they concur in the opinion that the separation of the United States from Great Britain probably caused our trade with them to be far more profitable than if they had remained in connection with us—a proposition which is not only impossible of proof, but full of the most glaring improbability. With our remaining colonies, almost I believe without exception, our trade is greater per head of the population than with the Americans. We have, indeed, had the statement advanced and supported with great ability by Mr. Eddy that *trade follows the flag*. Nakedly, as a statement of principle, that may be an exaggerated statement, but as a description of a strong *tendency* it is true. It strikes me that the fact will be found to lie between the two extremes. If, on the one hand, the axiom so broadly stated is extravagant, on the other it is as unwise as it is unfair to overlook the fact that the channels of trade are frequently laid down upon national and political lines of association. Mr. Merivale has pointed out in his lectures that an influence is exercised on trade by the similar habits and associations of an identical nationality, and how in South America part of the Spanish and Portuguese trade was perpetuated, not by convenience, but by habit.

Adam Smith is referred to as an authority by all the writers who have propounded the theory that colonies are a weakness to the parent State. I shall close my reference to this subject, by briefly reviewing the actual language of the great political economist, for

it appears to me that it has not been quite fairly used. He was writing at a time when the monopoly was in force, when the conditions of Colonial government were difficult, and chiefly against the evils resulting from that monopoly. He was writing during what he termed those "disturbances" by which the fairest and noblest part of our dominions was lost to the Empire. Arguing then under these circumstances how did he express his conclusion?

"Under the present system of management, therefore, Great Britain derives nothing but loss from the dominion which she assumes over her colonies."

But with that conclusion staring him in the face, the heart even of the cool old economist seems to have revolted from the doctrine of Imperial dissolution, and his sagacious genius told him that it was more difficult to destroy than to fulfil.

"To propose," said he, "that Great Britain should voluntarily give up all authority over her colonies, and leave them to elect their own magistrates, to enact their own laws, and to make peace and war, as they might think proper, would be to propose such a measure as never was and never will be adopted by any nation in the world. No nation ever voluntarily gave up the dominion of any province."

In the years that since then have passed, Great Britain has made to her colonies some of the concessions to which he referred, and it has been declared by ministers of State that she is prepared to make them all. But, I solemnly say, every one concerned should be very cautious about taking it for granted that England will create the precedent which the economist said had never existed. Let no English statesman, no Colonial government, be too sure of the tame acquiescence of the English people in the rupture of their connection. I for one would not go bail that they would keep the peace. The Americans, who were coolly discussing constitutional questions, and very generally admitting theories of the right of secession, when their Federal flag was fired on at Fort Sumter, woke up with a shock, flung theory and discussion to the winds, and concluded the argument with the bayonet. I should like to see the minister who would stand up in the House of Commons with the Bill in his hand to abrogate the connection of Canada with the Empire!

But Adam Smith proceeded to shadow forth a system of relations under which both colonies and mother country, being drawn into closer connection, might mutually support one another, He looked forward to an alliance between the colonies and Great

Britain. He propounded the plan by which the United States could have been saved to the empire. He proposed that in "parting with them," as he termed it, we should bind them to us again, should "settle with them such a treaty of commerce as would effectually secure to us free-trade. It might dispose them not only to respect for whole centuries together that treaty of commerce which they had concluded with us at parting, but to favour us in war as well as in trade, and, instead of turbulent and factious subjects, to become our most faithful, affectionate and generous allies." And, finally, he showed that to render the provinces advantageous to the Empire they ought not only to maintain their own peace establishment and contribute their proportion to its general government, but to make their proportionate contribution in time of war.

In the light of what has happened since these words were written can we doubt what would have been the policy advocated by the economist were he now alive? Had he seen the wonderful success of the federation which has since then grown to such proportions under our eyes, had he witnessed the change that has come over our Colonial relations, and noted the extent of independence conceded under them, the whole cost of the peace establishment of the colonies borne by themselves,—and yet had observed the almost passionate yearning towards the home-land, the loyalty which neither persuasion, nor misunderstanding, nor insult is able to chill—would he not have joined with us who say,—Here are conditions under which just and enduring ties are possible; here are clear dictates of the truest and most beneficent policy for all parts of the Empire; this is the time, the peaceful time, the precious opportunity to unite in one great people the British communities of the world, to settle our constitution on foundations that shall never be moved? The example of the United States proves to us how perilous it is to trust to after treaties to reinstate relations once broken, as it appears on the face of it the idlest absurdity to propose to fracture an empire in order to put it together again.

It is not necessary that we should dissolve this marvellous Empire, the upgrowth of an energy and sacrifice unrivalled in the history of races. It is not necessary that we should dismiss from our family circle that vast sisterhood of nations which has grown up under our parental care—whom we have nourished, for whom we have suffered and struggled, to whom we have given our blood, our wealth, our best strength; from whom we hope for reciprocity,

of power, wealth, and affection. We must take our stand on the unity of our race, on the unity of our interests, on language, religion, laws, manners, customs, and a citizenship that are one. "What God hath joined together let no man put asunder." In the light of recent history we cannot despise or overlook the tendency of races to unity of Empire. The confederacies of nations are expanding instead of contracting, and every new addition to an old State reduces by one the chances of international confusion. What I have said elsewhere I maintain anew with solemn earnestness; he who contributes to the dissolution of a great confederacy of States is committing a crime against civilisation and humanity. Oh, no! it cannot be! Even should the mother dismiss them, her daughters will not let her cast them off. They will cling to her skirts! They will cry out to her, in the urgent words of Ruth, "*Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest I will go: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.*"

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